foreign countries;

(b) the total expenditure incurred thereon; and

(c) the estimated cost of technology to be imported during the next two years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) The number of foreign collaborations involving import of technology, services and others approved by the Government during the years 1995 and 1996 are 2337 and 2303 respectively. The foreign collaborations are from 81 countries including France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Singapore, UK, USA & others.

(b) Lumpsum payments approved in respect of these collaborations are of the order of Rs. 7200 crores during 1995 and Rs. 2500 crores during 1996. In addition, there are payments by the companies towards items like royalty based on production value, training expenditure etc.

(c) The estimated cost of technology to be imported during next two years has not been assessed.

Construction of Car Shed at Asansol

254. SHRI HARADHAN ROY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the construction work of proposed car-shed for maintenance of EMU rakes at Asansol has been started;

(b) if so, when and the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The construction works started during Feb. 1996. The work content basically comprises of :-

(i) Civil Engg. work consisting of buildings, pits and covered shed, etc.

(ii) Provision of OHE.

(iii) Procurement of M&P items, etc.

(c) The work is likely to be completed after three years subject to availability of funds.

[Translation]

Secondary Switching Area Facility

255. PROF. OMPAL SINGH NIDAR : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Secondary Switching Area Facility is provided to a district having 10,000 telephone connections;

(b) if so, the reasons for depriving Firozabad district of Uttar Pradesh of the facility;

(c) whether the post of district Manager is lying vacant for a long time at the said place;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the time by which the said post is likely to be filled up ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) There is no post of District Manager in Firozabad.

[English]

Cases of SAIL referred to CBI

256. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether any matter pertaining to this Ministry related to Steel Authority of India Limited involving purchase, sales and export had been referred to CBI recently; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b) The Ministry of Steel have not referred any matter relating to SAIL involving purchase, sales and export, to the CBI recently.

Introduction of Express Train between Sealdah and Lalgola

257. SHRI AJAY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have since taken any

steps to introduce an express train from Sealdah to Lalgola under the name of 'Siraj Express' in the morning as there is not a single fast train available;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) There is no proposal at present to introduce an express train in the morning from Sealdah to Lalgola. Two pairs of passenger services in the morning from Sealdah cater to the traffic towards Lalgola.

(c) Operational and resource constraints.

Foreign Loan

258. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Nagarjuna Power Corporation Limited plans to raise 2.500 crore through foreign loan for its power projects;

(b) if so, whether the foreign loan would be raised from export credit agencies of UK, Japan, Korea, US and France;

(c) if so, the rate of interest on the loan;

(d) the time by which the financial closer of the project is likely to be completed;

(e) the total power to be generated from this project;

(f) whether Nagarjuna Power Corporation Ltd. has shortlisted Twelve companies for import of coal;

(g) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(h) the time by which the project is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (c) Nagarjun Power Corporation Limited (NPCL) proposes to set up a coal fired thermal power plant near Mangalore in Karnataka. For this project, the company has proposed to take recourse to foreign loans. However, the financial package has not yet been firmed-up by the project promoters.

(d) The financial closure of private sector power projects could be achieved only after all the necessary inputs/linkages and clearances including the techno-economic clearance of the Central Electricity Authority have been tied up.

(e) The project envisages a capacity of 1000 MW.

(f) and (g) The Company informed in May, 1997 that a press notification had been issued for prequalifying parties for importing coal in response to which about 20 parties responded.

(h) The completion of the project is conditional to tying up of the required inputs/linkages and obtaining necessary clearances and achieving financial closure.

[Translation]

Foreign Assistance for Mining

259. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the places where mining has been going up in Uttar Pradesh for the last three years till date;

(b) the details of the achievement made in this regard;

(c) whether any technical assistance has been sought or proposed to be sought from some foreign institutions for mining work; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the names of the foreign companies from which assistance has been sought ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b) As per information available, production of silica sand, magnesite, diaspore & pyrophyllite have registered an increasing trend during the last three years. The details of achievements of increasing trend of production of these minerals are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) and (d) It is reproted that M/s. Uttar Pradesh State Mineral Development Corporation Ltd., is setting up a silica sand beneficiation unit at Lalapur village, Allahabad district in colloboration with M/s. Hepworth Minerals & Chemicals Ltd., U.K.